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able and inflexible independence of mind, amid the difficulties of a situation of which great wealth was not a constituent part. He had better than riches. He possessed the honesty and true nobility of independence.

In the next number of the Magazine, some short sketch of his life, and a more full delineation of his character, may be expected.

MY DEAR SIR,

Sensible how deeply you appreciated the worth of our mutually valued, though I regret to add, late friend, Edward Rush-ton, I deem it my duty to inform you of the death of this excellent man, who departed on Tuesday morning, the 22d inst. after an illness of two days' continuance. This inestimable character has been lost to his family, his friends, and society, by persevering too tenaciously in the use of the Eau Medicinale, which had proved effectual in removing the gout from his limbs on several occasions, but recently it so powerfully affected his constitution as to render it incapable of sustaining an attack of apoplexy, which was the immediate cause of his dissolution. His benevolent disposition and just principles are well known to you.

His amiable daughters and son are inconsolable; they have indeed suffered an irreparable loss, for his conduct in private life was not only perfectly irreproachable, but highly meritorious. I so truly estimated his exemplary qualities of head and heart, as to feel the privation of such a friend very deeply. On Friday we perform the last melancholy duty.

Grieved at such a lamentable occasion for addressing you, I remain, dear Sir, your sincere friend,

Liverpool, Nov. 24, 1814.

His death is announced in the Liverpool Mercury on the following terms.

Died, on Tuesday morning, Mr. Edwd. Rushton, bookseller, Paradise-street. It may be truly said of him, that a more exalted character has seldom appeared in any age, or in any country. He was gifted with a bold and vigorous genius; and his poetic talents, too well known to need our panygeric, were fearlessly employed in the cause of Philanthropy, of Peace, of Freedom, and of the best interests of his fellow creatures. Alike just and generous, it was literally true of him, that, "The world was his country, and doing good his religion."

CORRESPONDENCE ON SUBJECTS CONNECTED WITH THE RETROSPECT OF POLITICS.

To the Proprietors of the Belfast Magazine.

ON THE ANTI-ORANGE PETITION.

GENTLEMEN,

I have observed with pleasure, that some part of your Monthly Retrospect is always devoted to the consideration of the more immediate grievances of this part of Ireland; and accordingly that the Orange associations, which indeed form the principal of those grievances, has uniformly called forth your marked attention and reprobation. The petitions against these societies have, of course, a natural claim on your protection. Much do I wish that your neighbours in the newspaper press, with such an example so near them, could be induced to quit that neutrality which is so unfriendly to the cause of justice, and to take an active part with those whose efforts they cannot but approve. To obtain the protection of the laws for the people, to unite all in the bonds of peace

and mutual confidence, is surely a high and honourable object; nor can I account for the inactivity of the Belfast Chronicle in such a cause, except it proceed from a dread of displeasing any body. Whether the dread of displeasing the Orange gentry can be termed in all cases, a *morbid sensibility*, I will not pretend to decide. Certain it is, the Orangeman, *strong in imputed loyalty*, will not be easily reconciled to the opposition that is made to his faction. This people in general are too *mystical* to be accessible to reason. Some of them there are whom you can reason with; and whom the conviction of truth, and an honest shame, have driven from all public connexion with the body. But with the aggregate, with the *Orange mass*, there is no effectual mode of arguing, but—petitioning against them.

"And will *this argument* be effectual? Or what use in preferring new petitions against an association whom the parliament and the government have refused

to put down?" Thus will one description of people say, when asked to sign and assist in forwarding the present petition against the Orangemen. It is remarkable how changing and contradictory are the pretences of men who have no good reason for their acts or omissions. Some good easy people gave, as the ground of their refusal to sign the petition of last year, that the Orange faction would shortly either decline of itself, or be put down by government. *This* was, indeed, the main ground of refusal; and they instanced the late declaration of Lord Castlereagh in the House of Commons, directly condemning them, in which he was joined by several members. After so plain an expression of the sense of parliament, would it be decorous, said they, to return upon the subject so suddenly? Would it be *mannerly* to bid the parliament do what they have just told you they certainly will do, if they see it necessary? Petitioning, then, would be quite superfluous; it would be "*throwing water on a drowned rat.*"

Unfortunately* this sagacious reckoning has been convicted of error; the former petition was not *superfluous*, but *insufficient* to procure redress, or even inquiry. The lovers of peace and liberty have been induced again to go forward, and invite the attention of parliament to this pernicious grievance. The publication of Judge Fletcher's charge has (we are told) directed the attention of the English people to the state of this country, and, it is hoped, has prepared the way for a consideration of our grievances by the parliament. Whoever regards Orangeism as one of these grievances, should join in petitioning against it.

It may appear very idle to say much in support of this plain truism. However, it so happens that a number of persons who dislike Orange Societies, do yet, on various pretences, decline subscribing the petition against them. The excuse mentioned above, is, I believe, advanced no more; but there are still some who "would advise the friends of civil and religious liberty to be silent, and wait quietly for the slow but sure hand of the government." Since the commencement

of the present administration, the independent press of the metropolis seem to be of this mind, and have withheld that support from the new petition which some of them gave to the former, under the idea (it would seem) that any redress must come from the government. Supposing this true, still the propriety and advantages of petitioning remain unquestioned: moreover, we can discover no strong dislike of the Orange system in any act of the present chief governor, that would make us trust solely to his administration for the removal of evils which are known and tolerated. "Very true!" says another of the recusants, "the Orange system is so evidently protected by the government, that no petition against it will be attended to." This plea rests on an assumption which we may well call "*terrible*;" however, even if it were so, it would still be the duty of the peaceable and loyal citizen to ask for the protection of the laws for himself and his fellow subjects. Admitting Mr. Peele to be as friendly to the Orangemen as they boast him to be, is it not wise for those who know and feel the evil of these combinations, to prevent Mr. Peele's deceiving himself or others on so important a subject? If Mr. Peele has this *leaning* towards the Orangemen, in the case of no petitions, or few, being now sent forward, the former sophistries of this gentleman will acquire increased plausibility, and leave a doubt as to the very *fact of grievance* in the mind of the Legislature. In whatsoever manner, therefore, Mr. Peele or the Whitworth administration be affected on the Orange question, the sure and honest way undoubtedly is, to tell the grievances to the parliament, and to the empire. This must bring under inquiry, sooner or later, a system that has thriven so long only because its malignant character had remained unknown. To urge this discussion should be the aim of all peaceable and loyal subjects.

Among those who decline to co-operate for this purpose, we should not forget to enumerate the over-cautious and interested; a larger class than one would at first imagine, who excuse themselves under various pretences. Thus, for instance, the recusants are in trade, and have many good Orange customers; or they are occasionally dependent on an Orange Custom-house officer; an Orange banker. Some have Orange connexions and neighbours, with whom they wish to stand upon fair terms, &c. Perhaps they would run *person-*

* The "Orange rat" is now discovered to have been an *old pet*, (a very unnatural one to be sure;) and so far from being drowned, is at this day sleek, plump, and thriving,—*gentle to its feeder!*

at danger by signing this petition, &c. To begin with the last of these reasons, and it has operated extensively in the Orange county of Armagh. I hope the parliamentary advocates of the petition will be instructed to urge this important fact, in proof of the system of terror which Orangemen have established. They cannot have a stronger confirmation of this than in the circumstance of men thus unduly withheld from doing that which they lawfully and constitutionally wish to do. The silence of these persons, if properly understood, is in fact more expressive than their petitions.

The other pretences (for they are generally no more than pretences) would have some weight, if this measure in which they are asked to co-operate had any character of violence or injustice, or were such as any rational Orangeman could complain of. In petitioning against this grievance they exercise peaceably and legally a natural right, the exercise of which right has in fact become a duty towards their persecuted fellow-subjects. And ought a just and honourable man sacrifice this duty at the shrine of a base and imaginary interest, or out of respect to some individuals of a contemptible faction. Yet these men boast of their own independence, and will talk, "Ye Gods how they will talk," of the intolerance and atrocities of Orangemen; as if the wrongs of their countrymen, and the violated laws demanded nought from them but "words." "*Non tui auxilio, non defensoribus istis!*" Such a spirit may suit with the narrow views of a mere money changer, but is unworthy of a free man. This is that fatal spirit that tolerates monopoly, impedes the progress of reform, and perpetuates the worst abuses of a government. It is remarkable that this sort of people always overcalculate the pretended danger. For if they acted honestly and to their professed principles, they would not only ensure respect, but overawe the intolerant man from any overt act of malice. Even by the Orangeman public opinion is not set at defiance; and he might be brought to act often impartially if he were not spoiled by the servile compliances of those who are sometimes in his power.

Of all the objectors to petitioning, I must confess I would have the least indulgence to a Roman Catholic, on whose community the grievance of Orangism presses the most, and whose refusal, almost at any risk, to join with the Protestants who are petitioning for his relief

would be so very base and unnatural. I can hardly conceive how a Catholic *could* refuse to concur in a measure dictated by a sympathy for his oppressed community. From him excuses should not be received on any terms. Indeed from every quarter, except one, excuses are for the most part false and feeble pretences.

The Protestant who is favourable to Catholic emancipation, even in its most qualified sense, is called upon to join in putting down an illegal combination that excludes the Catholic from the character and name, as well as from the rights of a loyal subject. The Protestant, who, not being an Orangeman, has however signed the Anti-Catholic petition, ought to sign the petition against the Orangemen. Because, whatever difference of opinion may exist as to political rights, there can be none among good men as to the peace of the country; which has been, and necessarily must be, so much disturbed, while so much of the population is divided between illegal and hostile factions.

And here, I am reminded of an objection which I understand has been made to signing this petition. This new objection is to one assertion in the petition, which states that the Thrashers and Ribbonmen arose in consequence of the Orange Societies. "Now," said the person, "I know the counter-associations were produced by the intemperance of the Catholic Board!" The magistrates who met at Downpatrick about three years ago, were of opinion that the Thrashing system had, at that time, made an alarming progress in the country. This was *previous to the existence of the Catholic Board*, which is here charged, like the lamb in the fable, with what had taken place before it was born. Perhaps he would say he meant the Committee; but the Committee was not reckoned intemperate; and the Board, notwithstanding all its intemperance, addressed repeatedly the Catholic population, cautioning them against secret societies. But this objection does not deserve notice.

Indeed there is no one but the Orangeman himself, who has any excuse for withholding his signature and his exertions from this just and necessary petition. It appears to be the duty of every loyal and peaceable man to join in this appeal for protection; and to pray from the Legislature, the suppression of a system, that openly tramples upon law, and would throw upon the government of this country the great odium of encouraging so monstrous an evil.

A PETITIONER.